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UNGA, VE

SUBJECT: (U) U.N. GENERAL DEBATE CONTINUES (SEPTEMBER 24,
PM)

11. (U) Summary: Speeches in the afternoon session of the second day of the UNGA General Debate (September 24) continued with some familiar topics. Latin American leaders from Venezuela, Costa Rica, and Paraguay all condemned the coup in Honduras. Most of the speakers called for reform of the United Nations with a focus on the Security Council. Climate change was also raised. Both Slovenia and Guyana called on the United Nations to organize a new Bretton Woods conference. Most also addressed the need to solve the Palestinian problem. Full text of statements is available at un.org/ga/64/generaldebate, video archives are at un.org/webcast/2009html. End Summary

12. (U) Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez began by promoting a new film by Oliver Stone, "South of the Border." Chavez encouraged everyone to see the film-if the capitalist theater monopolies do not keep it from being shown. For the balance of the speech, Chavez extolled the unique virtues of Bolivarian Socialism. At one point, he complimented President Obama and said he prayed God would protect him. After receiving a large round of applause for this comment, Chavez added that the dais no longer smelled like sulfur, but now smelled like hope. However, Chavez asked several times, "How many Obamas, are there?" Chavez explained that there are, in fact, two "Obamas"-the one who spoke at the United Nations and called for international cooperation, and another who built bases in Colombia and maintains an embargo on Cuba. He asked the Obama who spoke at the United Nations to "come over to the socialist side" and "join the axis of evil." Chavez condemned the coup in Honduras and claimed that it was initiated by the Pentagon, which he said operates independently around the world outside the control of the U.S. Government. Chavez concluded by saying that capitalism caused climate change and that the world needs an entirely new system.

13. (U) Slovenian President Danilo Turk stated that the world needs a comprehensive strategy to address climate in accordance with the principle of common, but differentiated responsibilities. He called on the United Nations and the G-20 to lead the way to financial stability and insisted the Bretton Woods organizations be adjusted. Turk also described four issues facing the United Nations: structural change (especially Security Council reform), a strengthened U.N. role in peacekeeping operations, disarmament/non-proliferation, and the United Nations, continued role as a forum for international consultations. He described the situation in Afghanistan as an example of a crisis where the United Nations can play a vital role.

¶4. (U) President Bharat Jagdeo of Guyana said the global financial crisis hit small Caribbean nations harder than most because of their dependence on commodities. He called for a global commission to restructure debt and for the United Nations to hold a new Bretton Woods conference. Jagdeo lastly addressed climate change and warned that the world must stop deforestation now, as opposed to waiting until ¶2030.

¶5. (U) Costa Rican President Oscar Arias Sanchez regretted the evils of defense spending and the international arms trade. He said that money and human resources currently spent on defense should be refocused on the problems facing the world, such as climate change. He claimed that national militaries serve no purpose but to suppress their own people. He diagnosed that developing countries in Latin America face three national challenges: strengthening their democracies, developing their people through arms reduction, and creating a new international order to combat climate change. Arias said that Latin America's civil structure is hollow and needs to build democratic institutions.

¶6. (U) President Fernando Mendez of Paraguay struck much the same tone as the President of Costa Rica. He spoke about the evils of defense spending and the international arms trade, claiming that war and defense spending enrich developed nations but harm developing nations. Mendez described the need for a new economic world order that would strengthen small economies, develop democratic institutions, end criminal aggression against the environment, find peaceful solutions to conflicts, and eliminate gender discrimination.

He also called for the end of the United States, embargo against Cuba and condemned the coup in Honduras. Mendez concluded by expressing his fears of an arms race in Latin America.

¶7. (U) Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete pressed for agricultural technology assistance for Africa as a means to address climate change. He extolled the virtues of youth employment programs in Africa, noting that unemployed youths feed violence. He commended progress (but wanted to see more) on the Millennium Development Goals and publicized the meeting on maternal and child health and the African Leaders Malaria Alliance. He expressed support for a two state solution for the Palestinians and asked that the people of Western Sahara be allowed to choose their own future. He further called for reform in the Security Council. Kikwete closed by asking for assistance with Tanzania's refugee problem and support for developing democratic institutions in Africa.

¶8. (U) Latvian President Valdis Zatlers said the world must focus on the three crisis "E's" (energy, economy, and environment) and the three crisis "F's" (finance, food, and fuel). He said that countries must not work strictly for self-interest and extolled the virtues of the Millennium Development Goals. Zatlers stated that each nation should contribute to the fight against climate change according to its own capabilities. He called for continued support for peace and stability in Afghanistan and the Middle East. He reiterated Latvia's support for Georgia and complained about human rights abuses in Iran after the elections. Zatlers reaffirmed support for the Geneva Convention and the International Criminal Court. He reminded the General Assembly of the review of the Human Rights Council in 2011 and said it would be a good time to strengthen the organization. He also called for Security Council reform and said that the United Nations must prioritize its budget and make it more transparent and disciplined.

¶9. (U) The President of Malawi, Bingu Mutharika, called for strengthened multilateralism and expressed the need to reform the structure of the United Nations (particularly the Security Council), spur international action on food security, and bolster international cooperation in addressing

climate change. Mutharika closed by calling for a global dialogue on democracy and its institutions.

¶10. (U) Iraqi President Jala Talabani spoke about political and economic progress in Iraq. He requested that nations currently hosting Iraqi refugees enable and encourage them to return home. He said the Iraqi government has already started creating a welcoming environment at home. He said that the real threat to Iraq is external, and he requested a Security Council investigation into the August 19 Baghdad bombings. Talabani asked that the current Security Council resolutions against Iraq be removed because Iraq is working to address its needs bilaterally, so the resolutions are no longer necessary. He requested that the United Nations increase its engagement in Iraq. Talabani endorsed the struggle of the Palestinian people and called for the Middle East to become a nuclear free zone.

¶11. (U) Gambian President Yahya Jammeh blamed Africa's problems on large western multi-national corporations and debt. He said that the lack of development in Africa is not Africa's fault and that Africa can do little to help itself. Jammeh cautioned that there will be consequences if the situation does not improve. He called for a speedy resolution of the plight of the Palestinians, Taiwan's inclusion in the United Nations, the lifting of the U.S. embargo on Cuba, support for Morocco's plan in Western Sahara, and Security Council reform.

Wolff